

St Margaret's Parish Men's Group**Draft Minutes of Meeting – Thursday 14th November 2024**

Present: Tom Scott (Chair), John McIllduff (Treasurer), Martin Wilkinson (Minutes), Pete Seath, George Connolly, Bob Creaney, Frannie McNicoll, Martin McNicoll.

Apologies for absence: Ken Ritchie, David Hambley.

Minutes of the meeting of 17th October 2024 accepted as correct and can be posted on parish website

Finance. Current balance is now £133.11. No change since last meeting.

Spiritual activities

Fr Syriac has approved the plan to restart the scripture discussion meetings during Advent. There will be four weekly sessions on Wednesday evenings from 27 November to 18 December in the Lady Chapel. Tom has resourced suitable material from the same source as last time, which the group had found satisfactory. It will be advertised in the parish bulletin and will commence at 1930 each week.

Social activities.**Since the last meeting.**

- Annual Dinner with Partners was on Friday 8th November at Garvock House attended by 26 participants including Fr. Chris and Fr. Syriac. It was reported that it was a very good meal.

Proposed activities immediately forthcoming

- St Andrew's Night in the Crypt will be our next activity on Saturday 30th November at 1930. Access to set up the crypt is available after the afternoon group leave at 1430. Tom will be there then to make sure we don't get locked out. Volunteers are asked to turn up then to help set up. We already have most of the materials needed. Fr. Chris will be able to supply musical entertainment with support of Frannie and Elaine. Frannie will need access to the sound control cabinet in the crypt which is kept locked and to which he does not have a key. Stewart Abercrombie may also play piano – perhaps he can use the keyboard from the choir. We now need members to bring prizes for the raffle. Outline plan is music 2000 to 2045 then quiz and sales of raffle tickets to 2115 followed from 2115 to 2230 by music with singing. The hall is to be cleared by 2300. Tickets will be on sale after weekend mass for £5.
- Christmas night out for the group is a meal at 1930 on Thursday 5th December in the Turkish restaurant Antioch in Bridge Street where we held last year's Christmas meal and which was enjoyed.
- Hogmanay in the crypt on the evening of 31st December. Fr Syriac has agreed to this proposal. It is a social evening for parishioners on 31st December which means nobody needs to see in the new year alone. There will be tickets on sale for £5 to ensure we do not exceed the crypt capacity.

Proposed activities still in planning

- Visit to the Royal Yacht Britannia is to be organised in 2025.
- Frannie has more information from the football club. The top level of tour is immediately before a game and costs £80 per head. This option was considered too expensive. An alternative possibility was an evening event with a tour at 1700 on Friday 1st February. There was a strong feeling that a visit should be on a day when a game is on since the tour is much less exciting and less interesting when there is no game. We should hold fire on the alternative of a visit to Celtic Park.

- Visit to Perth Museum, Stone of Destiny exhibition. Should be organised for early in 2025. The exhibition is excellent as is the museum. Arrange at our next meeting.
- St Margaret's themed tour of Hungary. A lot more information is now available to help with planning. A likely tour would last about a week with Ryanair flights to/from Budapest. Three days in Budapest would enable sightseeing there, including St Margaret's church, and a visit by frequent rail service to Esztergom, about 30 minutes north of Budapest, which has associations with St Margaret. We could then move southwards by train to Pecs, a very holy and historic city which has the Benedictine school which Margaret may have attended. Following that we would move eastwards to Szeged where St Margaret may have been born. We would spend 2-3 days in these two southern towns and then return to Budapest for the return air flight. These are only suggestions and the plan will be discussed further. All three sites can be reached by good rail services from Budapest but it might be useful to hire a coach for part of it, especially where the historic sites are outside the cities named. It seemed that May or September would be the best times but in view of planning still needed September is much more likely. There is also a St. Margaret's Pilgrimage walk of 18-20 km. Contacts have been formed which will help us to plan.
- Children's Christmas Party. Children's Liturgy Group now planning a celebration after a Sunday mass. Men's Group members could offer to help. We have suitably entertaining materials.
- Decided that to organize a Burns Night in addition to all the other activities we are doing would be overkill.

Catholic Mens Association. Fr Syriac has been contacted by a representative of this group wanting to give a talk after mass suggesting that the parish might want to form a component branch. Martin, Tom and John have each researched this group and concluded that we already provide similar activities, although we provide more social activity, and see the formation of a parish branch conflicting with the existing success and parish service of our group. It was agreed that Tom would write to the representative of the group explaining what we do.

Next Meetings: Our next regular date would be about the time of the Christmas Meal with other events that week. Therefore, it was decided that immediate matters could instead be dealt with during the pre-meal drinks in the Commercial Inn. In order to permit this we should meet there at 1830 on 5 December rather than at the usual pre-meal time of 1900. This would be particularly for those involved in the planning of events in the near future. Other diners for whom this is too early would still be welcome to join us at the normal time of 1900.

There will be no meeting in January. We will meet at a date to be decided in February to plan activities for Lent which commences 5 March. Our chair, Tom Scott, may be away for some dates up to 13 March so John and Martin will arrange any meetings during that period, if Tom is away.

Martin Wilkinson

23rd November 2024